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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002476

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PBTS](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KJUS](#) [MOPS](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: NINEWA GOVERNOR TELLS AMBASSADOR HE EXPECTS  
DELAYED ELECTIONS BUT ARTICLE 140 IN 2007

REF: A. BAGHDAD 2297  
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 0559  
[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 1171

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

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SUMMARY  
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[1](#)1. (C) In a July 18 meeting with the Ambassador, the Ninewa Governor agreed that the security situation in Ninewa province is good and that security could be transferred to Provincial Iraqi Control soon, provided the Iraqi Police's key equipment needs are met. The Governor said he did not believe that provincial elections are feasible this year, but told the Ambassador that he remains committed to seeing the Article 140 process completed by the year's close. Noting a specific lack of Ministerial support, the Governor also requested the Ambassador's assistance in working with the central government. END SUMMARY.

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NINEWA SECURITY PERMITS PROVINCIAL IRAQI CONTROL  
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[1](#)2. (C) Accompanied by Ambassadors Ford and Clarke, Ms. O'Sullivan, Team Leader Knight, BG Wiercinski, and incoming Team Leader Hyland, the Ambassador discussed Ninewa's security, politics, and future at length with Governor Kashmoula and Police Chief MG Wathiq in the Governor's offices 18 July. Although he has opposed Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) in the past, Governor Kashmoula agreed with the Ambassador that security in Ninewa is good, and Kashmoula said that if provided the "tools for success," Ninewa could transfer to PIC soon. Kashmoula cited heavy weaponry, armored vehicles, and explosive detection equipment as key Iraqi Police needs that must be addressed before moving to PIC.

[1](#)3. (C) Kashmoula emphasized that corruption is Ninewa's primary problem - not security - using Provincial Council Chair Issa's arrest (reftel A) as an example. The Governor noted that while security continued to improve, corruption is an even more insidious problem. Pledging his support to eliminate corruption in Ninewa, Kashmoula also emphasized to the Ambassador the importance of avoiding sectarian and ethnic strife.

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MINISTERIAL SUPPORT COMPLETELY ABSENT  
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[1](#)4. (C) Alluding to ongoing problems with Ministerial support, the Governor told the Ambassador that only Prime

Minister Maliki has truly supported Ninewa. However, Kashmoula lamented that the Prime Minister has "made many promises, but his hands and feet are tied." Responding to the Ambassador's queries about specific issues at the Ministerial level, Kashmoula described how provincial education officials sought his assistance to hire additional teachers only to be rebuffed by the Ministry of Education. Kashmoula also noted the Ministry of Interior's lack of support - specifically regarding the care of wounded police officers, personnel issues, and retirement benefits (including for Police Chief MG Wathiq). While unclear on whether questionable Ministerial support was a provincial or national issue, Kashmoula allowed that his upcoming visit to Baghdad would enable him to address these issues directly.

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PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS WILL NOT HAPPEN IN 2007  
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15. (C) When asked by the Ambassador about the possibility of provincial elections this year, the Governor said that although he "wishes that elections were today, elections will not happen by the end of the year." Dismissing staggered provincial elections as infeasible due to voter fraud and logistical constraints, Kashmoula said that national elections were unlikely given Baghdad's current security situation. He added that the Iraqi Higher Electoral Commission did not seem currently capable of undertaking national provincial elections.

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COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES PART OF THE PROBLEM  
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16. (C) Kashmoula stated that he had not seen a copy of the latest draft of the Provincial Powers Law under discussion by the Council of Representatives (CoR). Nonetheless, the Governor pointed out that positive developments at the CoR would be very beneficial to Ninewa, especially if the Provincial Powers Law were passed this month. The Governor said that the CoR is the root of Iraq's problems, pointing to continued discord in the CoR. The Governor complained that attempts at national reconciliation are misplaced, as reconciliation cannot be achieved with "those who kill women and children and boobytrap their bodies."

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FEDERALIZATION AND REGIONS WILL KEEP IRAQ TOGETHER  
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17. (C) Obliquely answering the Ambassador's queries about Article 140, the Governor promoted federalization with multiple administrative regions as the solution to Iraqi security challenges. Using the hypothetical example of a coup in Baghdad, Kashmoula noted that regional security forces would be obliged and capable of preventing governmental collapse. The Governor continued by comparing United Arab Emirates' success as separate emirates under central control with future regions under central Iraqi control. Kashmoula explicitly noted that "federalism is not dividing; it is the only way forward".

18. (C) When pressed by the Ambassador for his specific opinion on the status of Article 140, Kashmoula declined to cite any reasons why the referendum could not occur by the end of the year. He said that even as a Sunni Arab man from an Arab family, he believes that the Article 140 process should not be postponed. The Governor questioned why Iraqis who suffered under Saddam's Arabization program should wait for reparation, adding that "the Arabization problem should be solved, and today is better than tomorrow."

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COMMENT

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¶9. (C) Unconcerned by the continuing vagaries of the Article 140 process, Kashmoula continues to wholeheartedly support the Kurdish agenda (reftel B). Despite recent unpredictability, the Governor appeared to be in good health for the Ambassador's visit (reftel C); several interlocutors commented that he was the most focused he has ever been in their presence. The Governor's refusal to consider even staggered provincial elections despite past efforts to abandon his position indicates an unchanging commitment to Kurdish political aims. The Ambassador's visit provided a valuable opportunity to reinforce to the Governor the importance of an early transfer to Provincial Iraqi Control, as well as working toward transparent, fair provincial elections and constitutionally mandated referenda. END COMMENT.

CROCKER